

SCRUTINY BOARD (CENTRAL AND CORPORATE)

MONDAY, 2ND NOVEMBER, 2009

PRESENT: Councillor P Grahame in the Chair

Councillors J Bale, S Bentley, B Chastney,
P Ewens, M Hamilton, V Kendall, J Lewis,
A Lowe, A McKenna, A Parnham and
D Schofield

38 Declarations of Interest

Councillors Grahame, Lowe and McKenna declared personal interests in Agenda Item 9, Gambling Act 2005 – Statement of Licensing Policy as they all had been members of local casinos. Minute No. 44 refers.

39 Minutes - 5th October 2009

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

40 Request for Scrutiny - Woodhouse Moor - Park Byelaws

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development made reference to the request for Scrutiny regarding Park Byelaws at Woodhouse Moor. Details of the request, a copy of the Byelaws for Pleasure Grounds, Public Walks and Open Spaces and a response of the Section Head – Regulatory and Enforcement to the request were appended to the report. It was highlighted that this request was to consider the Byelaws and not the Executive Board decision to implement a designated barbecue area on Woodhouse Moor.

The Chair welcomed the following to the meeting:

- Councillor John Procter, Executive Member for Leisure
- Sean Flesher, Principal Area Manager (West), Parks and Countryside Services
- Richard Mond, Chief Recreation Officer
- Gill Marshall, Section Head for Regulatory and Enforcement, Legal Services
- Mr R Halliwell and Mr B McKinnon, Friends of Woodhouse Moor

In response to Members' comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- The Council did not operate a 'no enforcement policy'.

- Parks and Countryside Services operated a mobile patrolling team 'Parkswatch'. Part of their role was to enforce byelaws. It was reported that there had been 1,618 reported incidents across the City in 2008.
- There had been 13 incidents reported at Woodhouse Moor, mainly concerns about nuisance behaviour. The Police had been involved to help disperse offenders and the fire brigade had also been called to deal with a fire.
- With respect to enforcing the control of barbecues, it was reported that once a barbecue had been lit, it was difficult to pinpoint who had lit it and there were risk management implications in dealing with these situations.
- Fines had not been issued in respect of the breaking of byelaws in the City's parks.
- A commitment from Councillor Procter that byelaws would be vigorously upheld during the trial period.

The Chair invited Mr Richard Hellowell of the Friends of Woodhouse Moor to address the meeting. Photographic evidence was submitted to the Board, which showed areas of concern regarding activities taking place on Woodhouse Moor. Correspondence between the Friends of Woodhouse Moor and Lambeth Council was also circulated to Members and demonstrated measures implemented by Lambeth Council in response to similar issues.

Further issues discussed included the following:

- The provision of a designated barbecue area for Woodhouse Moor
- Contact with other Local Authorities regarding similar enforcement issues
- The use of Woodhouse Moor by students – it was reported that the Council had been in discussion with the universities regarding this
- It was suggested that the situation regarding enforcement be reviewed following the implementation of the barbecue area on Woodhouse Moor as this may reduce the number of incidents

RESOLVED – That a further report be brought to the Board following the implementation of the designated BBQ Area in Woodhouse Moor.

(Councillor M Hamilton joined the meeting at 10.10 a.m. during the discussion on this item. Councillor J Lewis left the meeting at 10.55 a.m. following the conclusion of this item).

41 Review of the Council's Treasury Management Policies post-Icelandic Reports

The Director of Resources submitted a report which informed the Board of the recommendations of three reports written by the Communities and Local Government Select Committee (CLG), the Audit Commission and Chartered

Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) as a response to lessons learnt from the Icelandic banking crisis.

The Chair welcomed Maureen Taylor, Chief Officer – Financial Development and Bhupinder Chana, Principal Financial Manager to the meeting.

It was reported that all three reports had highlighted that local authorities should have some kind of audit committee to scrutinise treasury management issues. The report would also be considered by the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee at its November meeting.

In brief summary, the following issues were discussed:

- Treasury Management in Leeds had been praised at a national level.
- Whether the role of scrutiny of treasury management should sit with the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee or the Scrutiny Board (Central and Corporate).
- Training issues for Members in relation to treasury management and accounting information.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the treasury function is operating effectively and that many of the recommendations made in the three reports are already incorporated within treasury practice be noted.
- (2) That the scrutiny of the treasury management function should sit with the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee.
- (3) That the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee should consider whether it is adequately trained to discharge its responsibilities to scrutinise the treasury function.

42 Work Programme, Executive Board minutes and Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report that outlined the Board's Work Programme and also included a copy of the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions and recent Executive Board Minutes.

Issues discussed included the following:

- December 7th Meeting – Cllr Brett would be in attendance and quarterly budget and performance reports would be submitted.
- Use of section 106 monies – it was reported that this was to be considered by the Scrutiny Board (City Development)

RESOLVED – That subject to any changes necessary as a result of today's meeting, the Board's Work Programme be approved.

43 Gambling Act 2005 - Statement of Licensing Policy

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Monday, 7th December, 2009

The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) updated the Board on the public consultation on the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Policy as required by the Gambling Act 2005. The report also included the final consultation report and presented the final draft version of the Policy for comment.

The Chair welcomed – Nicola Raper, Section Head and Susan Holden, Principal Project Officer, Licensing and Registration Services to the meeting.

In brief summary, the following issues were discussed:

- There had been a small response during the consultation period.
- Changes had been made regarding the protection of vulnerable people.
- The provision of licenses to undesirable premises/persons.
- It was reported that a report was due to the next meeting of the Executive Board and would also be going to the full Council meeting in November.

RESOLVED – That in accordance with the Budget & Policy Framework Procedure Rules, the comments of the Scrutiny Board be noted.

44 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 7 December 2009 at 10.00 a.m. (Pre-meeting for all Members at 9.30 a.m.).

The meeting concluded at 11.17 a.m.